



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY/ROCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/520,306	03/07/2000	Michael A. Kepler	1631077-0025	9605

7590 07/16/2003

Alex L Yip
Kaye Scholer LLP
425 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10022

EXAMINER

AGDEPPA;HECTOR A

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2642

DATE MAILED: 07/16/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/520,306	KEPLER ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Hector A. Agdeppa	2642	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 May 2003.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 39-89 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 39-89 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

- 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) <u>20</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

1. Claims 39 – 66, 68 – 78, and 80 - 89 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Pat (5,948,040) DeLorme et al. in view of US Pat 6,134,530 (Bunting et al.)

As to claims 39 – 56 and 87 – 89, DeLorme et al. teach a system and method wherein a user, an agent, a concierge, or some type of third-party provider can access the system of DeLorme et al. to schedule, preview, and/or plan trips and events and receive/offer map information, reservation/confirmation tickets for events, air travel, restaurants, goods or most any other type of service. The above information is presented to a user or customer of the agent/concierge via Internet, facsimile, paper hardcopy, mobile phone, wireline phone, or most any other electronic means, whether portable (pager/PDA, etc.) or not. (Col. 13, line 30 – Col. 16, line 31). Email is also contemplated in DeLorme et al. (Col. 64, lines 11 – 30). Furthermore, DeLorme et al. teach a directory database for available products, sources, and/or services which may be offered. Also, the system of DeLorme et al. contemplates use for those traveling for example and therefore, it is seen throughout the description that all goods and services are particular to the region where the user will be staying or traveling to or requires information on, etc. The invention of DeLorme et al. also provides many available services and goods to a user or customer by providing suggestions or

Art Unit: 2642

recommendations. Lastly, the invention of DeLorme et al. teach the use of electronic tickets for the aforementioned goods and services such as restaurant or airline reservations, event tickets, etc. that may be sent to or printed out by a user or customer. (Col. 17, line 1 – Col. 22, line 37, Col. 33, line 53 – Col. 34, line 56, Col. 50, lines 27 – 67).

What DeLorme et al. do not specifically teach is time limits, updating status of fulfillment requests, and scheduling attempts to provide a user or customer with requested information.

However, inasmuch as the invention of DeLorme et al. contemplates event ticketing and airline reservations, etc. as discussed above, it is inherent that time limits are involved. Furthermore, the invention of DeLorme et al. contemplates further that reservation requests have to be sent to and from third-party providers and that offers may be made and rejected, counteroffers made, etc. If an agent is using the invention of DeLorme et al. to serve a customer, it is inherent that the agent would have to send/receive communications to and from the customer, thereby invoking time limits as to events or airline reservations for example wherein the agent must act or serve the customer within those time limits. (Col. 29, lines 45 – 67).

Also, a user or customer or agent can use the invention of DeLorme et al. to preview events or services or goods before committing to them and so therefore, again, an agent would have to supply a customer with status updates, at least that the service or goods were reserved or bought, etc. (Col. 31, line 15 – Col. 32, line 26). Even if it could be argued that DeLorme et al. did not read upon the claimed invention as just

described, the claimed invention operates just as a standard call center with agents would operate.

The agents in a call center receive calls and usually those calls are placed in a queue and prioritized according to various parameters or preferences, timing issues, etc. This queue is analogous to the last action/next action operation of an agent processing requested concierge-like tasks. Many times, a customer is disconnected or cannot hold until a requested or appropriate agent is available and so callbacks must be scheduled between an agent and customer and many times, announcements are played to callers as to wait time, time until completion, etc. Inasmuch as DeLorme et al. teach the possibility of using his invention in a call center/agent-operated environment, it would have been obvious to operate the call center in such a manner as call center is a first aspect of the invention and the actual reservation/scheduling/planning, etc. is simply a second aspect of the invention. (Col. 51, line 1 – Col. 53, line 5, Col. 54, lines 21 – 67, Col. 64, lines 1 – 10).

DeLorme also does not teach providing information regarding a past request or usage of the system. However, as already discussed above, DeLorme contemplates using the system in a call center environment wherein agents use the system to serve a customer. Bunting et al. teach a routing system and method for sales and service centers that allow a previous customer to speak to the same agent he/she spoke to previously. This allows for better service to the customer in terms of familiarity with the customer on the part of the agent regarding the customer's preference(s), previous sales, etc. (Col. 11, lines 4 – 65 of Bunting et al.) It would have been obvious for one of

Art Unit: 2642

ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have implemented such a feature in the invention of DeLorme et al. inasmuch as such a feature is old and well known and a highly desirable feature to have in a call center environment. The motivation, as already discussed, is better and more efficiently being able to service a customer.

Inherently, if a system uses past call history in processing current calls/requests, the current call/request will be recorded/processed so it too may be used in the future as a past request that would aid in servicing the customer during a future call.

As to claims 57 – 62, DeLorme et al. has been discussed above. Further taught by DeLorme et al. is using a user or customer's preferences to select or provide goods or services as seen in Col. 19, lines 32 – 67. The TRIPS etickets, maps, electronic media can be likened to a second record including at least information concerning a location of the provider, for example, information regarding a certain restaurant that a traveler would come across. The invention of DeLorme et al. in giving a user or customer the opportunity to make a restaurant reservation, inherently means that an agent, whether local to that area or an actual agent of the restaurant would have to fulfill the reservation request. Furthermore, DeLorme et al. contemplate use of their invention by hotel chains, state tourism bureaus, etc. and as discussed above, a user may modify or reschedule his/her itinerary as so desired. Inherently this means that a user would plan his/her trip and preview or select certain services or goods that might be used or purchased and once the user is in the appropriate locale, using the invention of DeLorme et al. again to alter modify or confirm certain services or goods. Therefore it

Art Unit: 2642

would at the very least obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have allowed for remote or local agents to serve customers so that an "appropriately located" agent would end up serving that customer's needs.

Also, including various information on an eticket or "second record" is old and well known. For example, on an airline ticket, contact information must be provided and so inasmuch as the invention of DeLorme et al. teach the ability to provide airline tickets, including a telephone number would be at the very least obvious. Furthermore, since the invention of DeLorme et al. functions via wireline/less phones, PDA devices, laptops, electronic media, identifying a user is necessary and as is again, so very well known in the arts, such information can be gleaned from caller ID, ANI information, IP address, device ID, etc.

Not discussed by DeLorme explicitly is a situation when the agent and provider are not the same. However, as already discussed above, an agent may be a local agent of a travel agency and provider could be a restaurant or airline. In this situation, it is clear that the agent and "provider of the selected goods or service" are not the same.

As to claims 63 – 66, 68 – 78, and 80 - 86, DeLorme et al. has been discussed above. Since the invention of DeLorme et al. may be used via wireline/less phone, Internet, mobile service provider, etc. it is inherent that a switching unit would be used and information about a customer taken from the request-originating device and associated with a user or customer. How else is the invention supposed to operate without some form of switching unit when using a phone for example? Examiner is not

Art Unit: 2642

aware of any communications technology that exists and operates without the use of a switch or gateway or some type of software providing switching capabilities.

As discussed above, it is contemplated that a user or customer would use the invention of DeLorme et al. via some agent in a call center. Voice servers, interactive voice response (IVRs) features are almost standard in any call center. Furthermore, most automated services employ the use of some type of voice server acting as an operator. One need only pick up a standard telephone with voice mail service to experience this feature and so even if it can be argued that such is not contemplated by the invention of DeLorme et al., it would certainly be obvious for one skilled in the art to include such a feature therein. Also, DeLorme et al. in Col 14, lines 48 – 52 teach that his invention may be implemented as an automated agent or in Col. 14, line 66 – 13, as a kiosk or any number of automated embodiments. Furthermore, "connecting the communication call to the information assistance service after the request is fulfilled" is simply returning a caller to a main menu for example and is again obvious if not inherent in the invention of DeLorme et al. as already discussed.

Also, it is inherent in DeLorme et al. that some processor or function of the system detects the type of communication that an incoming request is received on or in. DeLorme et al. as already discussed contemplates the use of a PDA, a computer, the Internet, a kiosk, an agent, a telephone, etc. It is inherent that the system would have to know how to receive and process a request utilizing any of the above communication methods.

Art Unit: 2642

Furthermore, multimedia call centers are now old and well known and it is old and well known to employ agents or assign agents with specific skills or expertise in a certain communication mode. Therefore, again, since DeLorme et al. contemplates the use of agents and call centers, it would have been at the least obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have detected the type of communication/device used in making a request.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 39 - 89 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

See again the response to arguments in the previous final office action.

In response to applicant's argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicant's invention, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies are not recited in the rejected claim(s). Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

Conclusion

3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hector A. Agdeppa whose telephone number is 703-305-1844. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon thru Fri 9:30am - 6:00pm.

Art Unit: 2642

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ahmad F. Matar can be reached on 703-305-4731. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9314 for regular communications and 703-872-9314 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-4700.

H.A.A.
July 12, 2003


AHMAD F. MATAR
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2000